

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7727
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AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 DAR ES SALAAM 0788

EXDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, RH, US, UK
UUBJECT: RHODESIA - NEXT STEPS

1. SUMMARY. FOR THE TIME BEING, WE SHOULD KEEP TO THE LINE THAT AAP REPRESENTS BEST SOLUTION WE HAVE SEEN YET AND LET THE DUST SETTLE SOME MORE. WHETHER, WHEN AND HOW WE MOVE BEYOND THAT SHOULD DEPEND LARGELY ON WHAT AFRICANS DO. IN DECIDING OUR FUTURE COURSE, WE WANT TO KEEP IN MIND OUR BASIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA PROBLEMS WHICH CENTER ON AVOIDING SOVIET/US DIRECT CONFLICT, AND KEEPING AFRICANS WHO COUNT WITH US, AS EVENTS UNFOLD IN THE REGION.

END SUMMARY.

2. BRITAIN'S APPARENT ABANDONMENT OF UK/US PROPOSALS REQUIRES

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REVIEW OF COURSES OF ACTION OPEN TO US. WE THINK FIRST ITEM OF BUSINESS IS TO TRY TO RETURN BRITISH TO THE FOLD AND PURSUE STRATEGY SO EXCELLENTLY PRESENTED USUN 650. THAT WOULD REQUIRE AT MINIMUM BRITISH PUBLIC STATEMENT THAT IT STILL SUPPORTS UK/US PROPOSALS AS BEST APPROACH YET TO PROBLEM; OTHERWISE, FL AND PF WON'T TALK SERIOUSLY TO US AS A TEAM. WITH PROSPECT BRITISH MAY NOT GET BACK ON BOARD, WE NEED TO PONDER THE ALTERNATIVES AND WHAT

THEY MEAN FOR OUR FUNDAMENTAL INTEREST IN THE RHODESIAAN PROBLEM.

BECUASE OPTIONS INCLUDE REAPPRAISAL OF US/UK RELATIONSHIP IN AFRICA AND INVOLVE SOME OF OUR IMPORTANT GLOBAL INTERESTS A REEXAMINATION OF FUNDAMENTAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF OUR RHODESIA POLICY IS CALLED FOR.

2. AS WE SEE IT, RHODESIA ISSUE IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT AFFECTS FUTURE OF OUR ABILITY TO HAVE FL COOPERATION IN DEALING WITH WHOLE COMPLEX OF SUTHERN AFRICA ISSUES BEYOND RHODESIA IN THE YEARS AHEAD. RHODESIA ISSUE ALSO IMPACTS ON WIDER RANGE OF OUR INTERESTS REQUIRING COOPERATION WITH AFRICAN COUNTRIES THAT COUNT--E.G., PETROLEUM, COMMERCE AND AFRICAN DIPLOMACY WITH NIGERIA, MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY ISSUES SUCH AS LAW OF THE SEA, NORTH-SOUTH DIALOUGUE, AND UN ITEMS LIKE KOREA AND PUERTO RICO IN WHICH FORTY-TWO AFRICAN VOTES ARE IMPORTANT. IN MORE IMMEDIATELY FOCUSED SENSE, CENTRAL GOAL OF OUR RHODESIA POLICY IS TO HEAD OFF POTENTIAL US-SOVIET MILITARY CONFRONTATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND TO LIMIT GROWTH OF SOVIET AND CUBAN INFLUENCE IN THE REGION. IN PURSUIT OF THAT GOAL, OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO END WHITE MINORITY RULE IN A MANNER ACCEPTABLE TO THOSE AFRICANS WHO ARE VITAL TO ANY CONTINUATION AND ESCALATION OF THE FIGHTING--THAT IS, THE PF AND, IN FINAL ANALYSIS, THE FRONT LINE GOVERNMENTS.

3. THE FL GOVERNMENTS HAVE VARIOUS AND DIFFERING PREFERENCES FOR
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THE KIND OF GOVERNMENT THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN POWER IN ZIMBABWE, BUT THEY SHARE THREE IRREDUCEABLE REQUIREMENTS:

--SMITH MUST GO (FOR SYMBOLIC REASONS AND BECUASE HE CANNOT BE TRUSTED);

--WHITE CONTROL OF ARMY AND POLICE MUST END (THEY CANNOT BE TRUSTED);

-- ZIMBABWEANS MUST FREELY CHOOSE THEIR LEADERS.

THESE ARE VITAL TO FL BECAUSE OF THEIR LEADERS' OWN PERSONAL COMMITMENTS TO ENDING WHITE MINORITY RULE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, AND BECAUSE THEIR REGION REMAINS POLITICALLY UNSTABLE AND ECONOMICALLY CONSTRAINED AS LONG AS LARGE NUMBERS OF ZIMBABWEANS WITH OVER A DECADE OF GUERRILLA EXPERIENCE AND FOREIGN CONTACTS FEEL THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT IS ILLEGITIMATE.

4. FL GOVERNMENTS BELIEVE IT IS NECESSARY TO FORCE SMITH REGIME OUT OF POWER SO THOSE REQUIREMENTS CAN BE MET; HE WON'T GO VOLUNTARILY. THAT CAN BE DONE EITHER BY AFRICANS CONTINUING THE FIGHTING, OR BY ENLISTING THE HELP OF OUTSIDERS WHO CAN DO THE

JOB QUICKER AND WITH LESS KILLING AND OTHER DESTRUCTION. IT WAS PRECISELY BECAUSE WE COMMITTED OURSELVES AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS TO DO JUST THAT, THAT FL ACCEPTED NEGOTIATING APPROACH OF UK/US PROPOSALS AND COOPERATED WITH US IN TRYING TO EFFECT THEM. WE SAID WE WOULD SEE TO IT THAT SMITH AND HIS POWER STRUCTURE WENT, AND THAT FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS OCCURRED. IN RETURN, THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS REMAINED PERIPHERAL TO EVENTS.

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EXDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

5. IF UK/US PROPOSALS ARE NOW DEAD, WHAT ALTERNATIVES ARE OPEN TO FL IN PURSUIT OF THEIR IRREDUCEABLE REQUIREMENTS IN RHODESIA, AND HOW DO THOSE OPTIONS MESH WITH OUR OWN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES IN RHODESIA?

--THE FL COULD CONTINUE TO PURSUE NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WITH THREAT OF WESTERN-BACKED MEASURES TO TOPPLE SMITH. WHAT WAS A POSSIBILITY UNTIL THIS WEEK OF A TWO-TRACK APPROACH THAT LINKS ASPECTS OF INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT ABOUT CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS WITH UK/US PROPOSALS ABOUT TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS (DAR 513) SEEMS NOW DEAD AS A RESULT OF BRITAIN'S DECISION TO ABANDON SHIP. WE CANNOT AND SHOULD NOT TRY TO IMPLEMENT UK/US PROPOSALS ALONE. THERE REMAINS PROSPECT, AS NYERERE HAS PUT IT

BEFORE, OF TAKING UK/US PROPOSALS TO UN WITH WHOEVER CARES TO JOIN
IN SUPPORT. FL WOULD CONSIDER THAT A CREDIBLE OPTION ONLY IF
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CONVINCED WE WOULD SUPPORT OR AT MINIMUM NOT BLOCK STRONG UN
MEASURES AGAINST RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA IF SMITH DID NOT GIVE
IN. (FL MIGHT IN TIME BE DRIVEN TO GO TO UN IN NON-COOPERATIVE
WAY JUST TO EMBARRASS US OR OTHERS THERE MIGHT TAKE INITIATIVE
TO DO SO.) UNLESS DEMONSTRATION OF UN SOLIDARITY BROUGHT
BRITISH BACK ON BOARD, WE WOULD CONFRONT PROSPECT OF OPEN BREAK
WITH UK ON SOUTHERN AFRICA POLICY IF WE JOINED IN UN MOVE. IT
WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO MANAGE SOVIET EXCLUSION FROM SOUTHERN
AFRICA DECISIONS IF MATTER TRANSFERRED TO UN AREA. BUT FOR SOME
PERIOD OF TIME AT LEAST, THERE MIGHT BE CONTINUED MOMENTUM OF
TALKING INSTEAD OF SIGNIFICANTLY ESCALATED FIGHTING. AS DISCUSSED
BELOW, TIME IS IMPORTANT IN ALWAYS CHANGING AFRICA.

--THE FL COULD STEP UP THE FIGHTING WITH OUTSIDE SUPPORT. WE
ASSUME THIS DOES NOT MEAN WITH OUR ACTIVE SUPPORT. WITH ALL THE
LIKELIHOOD INCREASED FIGHTING WOULD CARRY OF RHODESIAN RETALI-
ATION AGAINST FL SANCTUARIES POSSIBLY WITH SOUTH AFRICAN BACKING,
WE ASSUME FL WOULD ACCEPT ALMOST CERTAIN OFFERS OF SOVIET AND
CUBAN MILITARY HELP. THE ONLY WAY WE COULD AVOID CONFRONTATION
WITH SOVIETS WOULD BE NOT TO JOIN THE FRAY OURSELVES, DEPLORE
THE INTRODUCTION OF OUTSIDE FORCES, CALL FOR NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT
AND THEIR REMOVAL, AND COUNT ON THE SELF-INTERESTS OF AFRICANS
TO OBTAIN THEIR REMOVAL AFTER THE MILITARY VICTORY. HAZARDOUS
ASSUMPTIONS ON THIS TACK. WE ALSO WOULD BE COUNTING ON THE ABILITY
OF THE AMERICAN EXECUTIVE BRANCH TO SELL THAT POLICY TO THE
CONGRESS AND PUBLIC OPINION. SOUTHERN AFRICA MIGHT WELL BE MORE
DIFFICULT TO SWALLOW THAN THE HORN.

--THE FL COULD LET THE DUST SETTLE A BIT MORE. RECOGNIZING
THAT THERE IS YET NO INTERNAL AGREEMENT, AND WITH A BOW TO THE
OBSERVATION OF PLINY THE ELDER ("EX AFRICA SEMPER ALIQUID NOVI"),
EVERYONE MIGHT WAIT AND SEE A LITTLE LONGER. MUZOREWA MIGHT YET
BREAK AWAY. SMITH MIGHT

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Z OVERPLAY HIS HAND. THE BRITISH MIGHT
COME TO THEIR SENSES. THE FL MIGHT LET THE FIGHTING ESCALATE A
BIT MORE, KEEP THE BRITISH FEET TO THE FIRE (AND ANYONE ELSE'S
WHO SINS), CONTINUE TO CONDEMN THE SALISBURY TALKS, PREPARE
THE CITIZENRY FOR TURNING THE CLOCK BACK A YEAR OR TWO REGARD-
ING FL'S STANCE ON EAST-WEST RE-
LATIONS, BUT NOT BURN ANY BRIDGES

YET. FOR OUR PART, THAT WOULD MEAN IN THE SHORT RUN A PUBLIC REFUSAL TO APPLAUD WHAT IS GOING ON IN SALISBURY AND A PUBLIC DISCLAIMER ABOUT ANY INTENTION TO GRANT RECOGNITION TO AN ENSURING REGIME UNTIL IT BECAME CLEAR THAT A REAL TRANSFER OF POWER HAD OCCURRED FROM WHITE TO BLACK HANDS. WE MIGHT EVEN DUST OFF SOME VAGUELY FAMILIAR LANGUAGE ABOUT WITHHOLDING RECOGNITION UNTIL THE NEW GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATES IT IS IN EFFECTIVE CONTROL OF THE COUNTRY.

6. OUR NEXT COURSE OF ACTION, IF OWEN CONTINUES HIS PRESENT COURSE, SHOULD BE TO KEEP TO THE LINE THAT WE THINK THE UK/US PROPOSALS ARE THE BEST SOLUTION AND WE HAVE NOT SEEN ANYTHING BETTER YET. WHETHER WE MOVE BEYOND OR BACK FROM THAT, AND WHEN WILL DEPEND LARGELY ON WHAT THE AFRICANS DO. ROOM FOR INITIATIVE BY US HAS BEEN CRAMPED FOR THE TIME BEING BY BRITAIN'S RECENT ACTIONS. THUS, AS PROJECTED DAR 402 PARA 5, CONDITIONS ARE SUCH NOW THAT IF OWEN CONTINUES HIS UNILATERAL COURSE, WE SHOULD STATE OUR POSITION AS DIFFERENT FROM BRITAIN'S, AND LET EVENTS UNFOLD A BIT MORE. OUR INTERESTS CANNOT BE SERVED BY OUR IDENTIFICATION WITH BRITISH AND OTHER EFFORTS TO LEGITIMIZE THE CURRENT MOVES FOR AN INTERNAL SOLUTION TO THE RHODESIAN PROBLEMS.
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